



MFC News

Caring for the Trees and Forests of Mississippi Since 1926

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December 2013



Inside This Issue:

Capital Christmas Tree.....	2
National Christmas Tree.....	3
Tree Knowledge - Who Am I?.....	4
400 Year Old "Jack's Oak" Nears The End Of Its Life.....	5
U. S. Forest Service Make Maps Available on Smart Phones.....	6
New Law Enforcement Officer...	7
Odds & Ends	9
Mississippi Firewise.....	10
Home Holiday Fires	10
MFC Training Schedule.....	13
Having Fun!!.....	14
Safety First.....	16

WISHING
YOU
A
VERY
MERRY
Christmas



GlitterBall.com

The Mississippi Forestry Commission provides equal employment opportunities and services to all individuals regardless of disability, race, age, religion, color, gender, national origin, or political affiliation.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider

Holiday Schedule for



**Christmas 2013 -
Tuesday, December 24th and
Wednesday, 25th.**



**New Year's 2014 -
Wednesday, January 1, 2014.**



Newsletter Deadlines

All submissions are welcome. Photographs are encouraged (although space limitations may curtail inclusion). Items must be received by the *10th of the month* to be included in the next month's issue. E-mail submissions (in *Microsoft Word*) and photos to

lharris@mfc.state.ms.us

or mail to:

Lisa A. Harris
Mississippi Forestry Commission
822 SCR 115 S
Raleigh, MS 39153



Capital Christmas Tree

The Capitol Christmas Tree (formerly the Capitol Holiday Tree) is the decorated tree that is erected annually on the West Front Lawn of the United States Capitol, in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the Christmas holiday season. The selection, installation, and decoration of the tree are all overseen by the Superintendent of the Capitol Grounds of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC).

The tradition of the Capitol Christmas Tree, or "The People's Tree," began in 1964 when Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives John W. McCormack (D-MA) placed a live Christmas tree on the Capitol lawn. This tree lived three years before succumbing to wind and root damage. In 1970, the capitol architect asked the U.S. Forest Service to provide a Christmas tree. Since then, a different national forest has been chosen each year to provide "The People's Tree." This national forest also works with state forests to provide companion trees that are smaller Christmas trees for offices in Washington, D.C.

2013 will mark the second time that Washington state has provided the Capitol Christmas Tree. In 2006, a Pacific silver fir was provided from the Olympic National Forest. The 2013 tree will be harvested in the Colville National Forest in northeast Washington state. Colville National Forest staff selected several tree candidates and in June the Superintendent of the Capitol Grounds made the final selection of the official 2013 Capitol Christmas Tree.

The tree will be harvested November 1 and wrapped for its journey. It will spend several weeks on the road visiting communities across the country before arriving at the capital in time for Thanksgiving.

The Capitol Christmas Tree will travel with companion trees and more than 5,000 hand-made ornaments. Washingtonians are invited to create ornaments depicting this year's theme "Sharing Washington's Good Nature." Youth ages 5-19 who submit ornaments will be

entered to win a trip to Washington, D.C. to light the tree with House Speaker John Boehner at a ceremony in early December. After the lighting ceremony, the Capitol Christmas Tree will be lit nightly from dusk to 11:00 pm throughout the holiday season.

The Capitol Christmas Tree should not to be confused with the National Christmas Tree, which is planted near the White House and lighted every year by the president and first lady. The Speaker of the House officially lights the Capitol Christmas Tree.



The National Christmas Tree



Since 1923, the United States has held a tradition of lighting a National Christmas Tree in Washington, DC. In 1978, a live 40-foot Colorado blue spruce was transplanted from York, Pennsylvania to its present site on the Ellipse, the grassy area south of the White House. In 1954, a "Pathway of Peace," 56 smaller, decorated trees representing all 50 states, five territories, and the District of Columbia were planted surrounding the National Christmas Tree. Each year sponsoring organizations from each state provide tree decorations that are encased in a protective plastic globe to shield it from the weather. The lighting of the National Christmas Tree is the beginning of a three week Washington, DC Christmas tradition.

The **National Christmas Tree** is a large evergreen tree located in the north-east quadrant of the The Ellipse near the White House in Washington, D.C. Each year since 1923, the tree has been decorated as a Christmas tree. The grand illumination of the Christmas lights on the tree by the President of the United States early

in December is an annual event. Every president since Franklin D. Roosevelt has made formal remarks during the tree lighting ceremony. Since 1954, the event has marked the start of month-long festivities known as the **Pageant of Peace**. Smaller trees representing the U.S. states, District of Columbia, and unincorporated territories of the United States around the National Christmas Tree are referred to as the **Pathway to Peace**.

"The first National Christmas Tree," lit on December 24, 1923, in the middle of the Ellipse outside the White House. The idea of a decorated, outdoor national Christmas tree originated with Frederick Morris Feiker. In 1921, Feiker joined the personal staff of United States Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover as a press aide. The Society for Electrical Development was looking for a way to encourage people to purchase more electric Christmas lights and use electricity, and Feiker suggested that President Calvin Coolidge personally light the tree as a way of giving Christmas lights

prominence and social cachet. Feiker arranged for Paul Moody, president of Middlebury College in Vermont to donate a 48-foot (15 m) tall balsam fir as the first National Christmas Tree

The site for the tree was personally approved by Grace Coolidge. Arrangements were also made to have 3,000 city school children present to sing Christmas carols and the United States Marine Band to play music. The National Broadcasting Company (NBC) agreed to broadcast the event on radio. The tree was decorated with more than 2,500 electric bulbs in red, white, and green donated by the Electric League of Washington.

President Coolidge lights the 1924 tree. The 1924 ceremony changed significantly. In April 1924, Coolidge gave a speech to the American Forestry Association in which he criticized cutting down trees for use as Christmas decorations. Feiker believed this was the end of the

(Continued on page 5)

September's Birthdays



Samuel Morgan -3
Kenneth Parker -3
Robert Ponder -3
Melissa Rea -4
Elisha Williams -5
Ted Harris -6
Charlie Bass -7
Dwight Brown -7
Herbert Coker -7
Otis Vanison -7
Patrick Carlisle -8
Tracy Mooneyhan -8
Vincent Smith -8
Jessie Brown -9
Benjamin Ford -9
Lonnie Cook -10
Meacham Harlow -10
John Locke -11
Samuel Gural -13
John Henderson -13
Herman Watson -13
Richard Hollis -14
Stuart Sellers -14
Dewitt Vowell -14
Jake Camp -15
Preston Smith -16
Bobby Stevens -17
William Fuller -18
Duane Hodges -18
James Oswald -18
Joe Miles -19
Jordan Hand -20
Mark Taylor -20
Garron Hicks -22
Andrew Randolph -22
Steven Anders -23
Johnathan Lewis -24
Terrica Randle -24
Michael Alsworth -25
Duncan Riley -26
Angela Bessonette -27
Jared Bynum -27
Mark Williamson -30
Randy Wilson -30
Anna Whatley -31





- ☺ John Henderson, Forester Trainee, Hancock County, SED
- ☺ George Knight, Forester I, Jones County, SCD
- ☺ Jeffrey Seymour, Forest Ranger, Stone County, SED
- ☺ James Burris, Emergency Telecommunicator, SCD Office
- ☺ Derrick Washington, Forest Ranger, Wilkinson County, SED
- ☺ Riley Duncan, Forest Ranger, Jones County, SCD
- ☺ Bradley L. Pigg, Forest Ranger, Leaker County, ECD
- ☺ Kent H. Hailey, Forest Ranger, Winston County, ECD
- ☺ Andrew Randolph, Forest Ranger, Monroe County, NED
- ☺ Jimmie Steele, Forest Ranger, Amite County, SWD
- ☺ Donyell T. Hemphill, Forest Ranger, Leflore County, NWD



Needles:

Type: 2 per fascicle; evergreen; persistent 2 seasons

Size: 2.0" - 4.0" long; fascicle sheaths 0.25" long

Color: dark green

Characteristics: slender; somewhat flattened; twisted

Twigs:

Size: slender

Color: gray-green young; light brown mature

Characteristics: smooth on young branches; older branches smooth for several years

Cones:

Pollen Cones: greenish yellow; <0.5" long; clustered at the base of terminal buds

Ovulate Cones: pinkish pale green; 1-3 on tips of fertile twigs

Mature Cones:

Size: 2.0" - 3.5" long

Shape: conical-elliptical
Characteristics: nearly stalkless; slightly keeled scales; small deciduous prickles

Seed: winged; nearly triangular; 0.13" long; thin, dark gray shell, mott-

Tree Knowledge - Who Am I?

led with black; wings 0.63" long, 0.25" wide, broadest below the Middle

Bark: young trees smooth, thin, grayish brown; older trees dark gray-brown to nearly black, furrowed, narrow scaly ridges

Physical Attributes:

Form: single stem

Size: 90.0', mature

Growth Rate: rapid; 30.0' maximum @ 20 yrs

Life Span: moderate (>50 yrs)

Tolerances:

Shade: tolerant

Drought: low

Fire: none

Anaerobic: high

Habitat and Ecology:

Site: moist, sandy, loam soils of alluvial flood plains, stream banks or hammocks with mixed hardwoods in the lower Coastal Plain

Soil Texture: medium - coarse

Soil pH: 3.8 - 5.6

Range: South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana; in Mississippi, primarily in the southern third of the State but has been recorded in Attala and Winston Counties

Wildlife Value and Uses:

provides some habitat and

food for wildlife as a member of mixed pine-hardwood communities

Timber Value and Uses:

limited commercial importance; brittle and close-grained, has few resin canals, and is not durable; planted to some extent for use as a Christmas tree; can be used as it occurs naturally for pulping operations---use in large quantities for papermaking might require operational changes to meet strength requirements

Landscaping Info: speed of growth and thick, dark green needles are making them popular landscape trees; can be planted to make a thick evergreen border; more tolerant of moist soils than many other pines; works great as a specimen tree in the landscape; can be trimmed and used for Christmas trees

Other Facts: attains its largest size, and occupies areas of considerable extent in northwestern Florida

Who Am I?



(Continued from page 3, *The National Christmas Tree*)

Christmas tree lighting ceremony, but his wife suggested that a live tree be used instead.

Will H. Hays, chairman of the Republican National Committee, was also chairman of Amawalk Nursery, and Hays arranged for a live, 30-year-old, 35-foot (11 m) Norway spruce to be delivered to the capital. The tree arrived in the city on December 13 and was planted on December 18 on the west side of Sherman Plaza. The tree was planted by the American Forestry Association, and decorated with 1,000 red, white, and green lights and white electric candles again provided by the Electric League of Washington. The tree was now called the **National Community Christmas Tree**, and the Community Center Department of the District of Columbia Public Schools coordinated the choirs for the event while the United States Army Band provided music. Coolidge threw a switch at 8:00 P.M. to light the tree. It was the only year a switch was used; before and since, a button has been pushed. Although he did not address the people, he and Mrs. Grace Coolidge stayed to sing Christmas carols with the large crowd of several

thousand.

An inspection of the National Community Christmas Tree in 1929 found that the tree had been severely damaged by the decoration process and the heat and weight of the lights. Amawalk nurseries again donated a living tree, this one a 35-foot (11 m) tall Norway spruce. It was planted on May 29, 1929. The year 1929 was special in other ways, too. It was the first time that Christmas tree decorations (not just lights) were placed on the tree. To prevent the tree from being damaged during decoration, scaffolding was erected around the tree (instead of ladders placed into the branches), lighter strings of lights were used, lights with a lower wattage were employed, and a low fence erected around the tree so that its roots would not be trampled.

The National Community Christmas Tree was again found to be so severely damaged in 1931 that it was replaced a second time. The National Park Service history of the tree concludes that although there is no documentation that the tree was removed, photographic evidence clearly shows the 35-foot (11 m) tall Norway spruce had been replaced

by a 25-foot (7.6 m) tall blue spruce. The National Park Service believes this tree was obtained from the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capitol in the spring of 1931. During the 1931 ceremony, a buzzer went off when Hoover lit the tree at 5:00 P.M. Because the button he pressed was not actually connected to the electricity, the buzzer alerted another official to actually light the tree. The button the president pushed would not be reconnected to actual electricity again until 1980.

In 1933, the National Community Christmas Tree stood alone on Sherman Square. All plants but the National Christmas Tree had been removed from the area in the fall and the ground regraded as part of a widening of E Street NW. During early 1934, the tree was cut down and replaced with double row of willow oaks. In 1934, the National Christmas Tree was relocated to Lafayette Park north of the White House.

The 1931 Norway spruce had again become damaged, and the National Park Service purchased two "Koster" blue spruce cultivars to plant on the west side of Sherman

(Continued on page 11)



Moving On

- * Jerald Shelvy, Forest Ranger, SWD
- * Kristopher King, Forest Ranger, NWD
- * Avis Havard, Forest Ranger, SED
- * Collin Kent Strickland, Forest Ranger, SCD



Gone Fishin'

- ☺ George Byrd, Northern Public Outreach Forester with 35 years with the MFC.

Tree Knowledge - Who Am I? for December 2013 was the Drummond's Red Maple

Check out page 71 in the Mississippi Trees book.





400 Year Old “Jack’s Oak” Nears The End Of Its Life

Glen Ellen, CA
(November 25,
2013) —

Amidst the 1,400 scenic acres that make up Jack London State Historic Park there are many beautiful trees, some estimated to be 2,000 years old and trees over 100 years old still bearing fruit. But no tree is as famous as “Jack’s” Oak tree, estimated to be nearly 400 years old, standing just outside the cottage that Jack and Charmian London called home. For the past year, an array of experts have assessed the status of the tree and all options to save it, but fear it has come to the end of its life cycle.

For the past year, in close collaboration with the State of California, the Valley of the Moon Natural History Association, which operates Jack London State Historic Park, has consulted many experts, arborists, naturalists as well as California States Parks’ senior archeologist examining the status of the tree and exploring any and all options to save it.

It has been determined that there are structural issues with the tree and also pathogens present that cause rot. Additionally, there

have been at least three major limb failures in recent years. In December 2012, a limb measuring 30 inches in diameter, one of the sprawling branches on the side facing away from the cottage came crashing down in a storm, damaging the fence around the tree.

As a result, State Parks has identified the tree as a potential hazard and undertaken a number of steps to address this hazard, which may ultimately result in removing the tree. When and if removal of the tree occurs is currently pending the results of further tests.

“We share and understand the public’s sadness about letting the tree go. It’s a huge, beautiful oak that’s central to Beauty Ranch and has been a life force for wildlife and one of the largest producers of acorns for Native Americans in the area,” said Tjiska Van Wyk, Execu-

tive Director of Jack London Park Partners, which operates the park.

“Our goal is to preserve Jack London’s Beauty Ranch and guarantee that this historic State Park is safe and thriving for future generations. With that as our mission, we are planning to honor this important and majestic tree with several celebrations including having local children gather the tree’s acorns to be planted giving life to new Oak Trees.”

[Learn more about efforts to save, celebrate, and honor the tree.](#)



US Forest Service Makes Maps Available On Smart Phones, Tablets



OrgeonLive.com,

The U.S. Forest Service now offers access to a variety of visitor maps for people using Android and iOS devices .

The mobile app makes it easier than ever to plan a visit to a national forest or grassland, according to U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell, in a statement put out by his office. By putting important forest information at visitors fingertips, it will encourage more Americans to get outside and explore their forests, he went on to say.

The digital maps are part of U.S. Department of Agriculture's work toward reaching President Barack Obama's initiative to create a paperless government that also provides the American public with better, more accessible information. Online customer surveys indicated a desire for more online products and information, such as maps.

The Forest Service is currently working on the first phase of a website redesign, expected to debut early in 2014, which centers on a map-based tool for planning trips onto the nation's forests, grasslands and other special places.

The PDF Maps Mobile App, developed by Avenza Systems Inc., is available as a free download from iTunes and the Android Play Store. The app provides access to Forest Service maps, such as motor-

vehicle-use maps, which are free, while pages from national forest atlases are 99 cents and forest visitor maps are \$4.99. Prices are pending for other agency maps.

The maps are geo-referenced with the user's location appearing as a blue dot. The app works on iPhones (3GS or newer) and iPads with WiFi+3G. It also works with Android 4 or newer operating systems on devices with at least 1 gigabyte of memory.

Through the app, users can purchase and download professionally created maps that are stored on their devices. They can use the maps based on their location when GPS is available. The maps also will allow users to measure distance and area, find coordinates, open a current view in Google maps, plot place marks, add notes, enter their own data and add photos as attributes. Almost 700 Forest Service maps are available through the app.

In areas of national forests and grasslands where Internet connections are unavailable, the app and static maps work well if users download the maps prior to their visit. The apps and maps also will be useful for wildland

firefighters.

In geographic areas with Internet availability, users will be able to use the products with live data. The interactive map is expected to be available on a limited basis starting in March 2014.

Paper maps are still available for purchase online at the National Forest Store.

The Forest Service differs from other federal government agencies in how the forest visitor map is funded. The Agriculture Adjustment Act of 1938 calls for the sale of maps as the funding mechanism to revise and produce maps for the public. In 1999 the Act was amended to include products available through the web as "geo-referenced data."





New Law Enforcement Officer

Submitted By Scott Miles, Chief

Randy Wilson started the Basic Law Enforcement Academy on 6-30-13 at the South Regional Public Safety Institute within Camp Shelby Military Base for the 10 weeks of vigorous mental and physical law enforcement training.

Randy along with his wife, Faith, had to make a great deal of sacrifice to allow Randy's attendance at this academy. Randy and Faith have three small children at home and that is a handful even without one parent missing in action.

Over the course of this academy Randy and I stayed in contact each weekend when he had to report in and when he departed for the weekends. During Randy's second week he was named class leader. The same leadership skills and qualities were noticed at the academy that have been noticed while Randy has been employed at the MFC. Randy did endure some tuff days during July and August as the academy progressed, but Randy did remain class leader thru their graduation.

On 9-5-2013 during the Graduation Ceremony Randy did address the class, faculty and audience members with a well thought out and meaningful presentation as class leader for the graduating class of 2013-03. During this Graduation Ceremony Randy was also recognized with a special achievement award "4th Congressional District Award". This award is given to the highest achiever living in the 4th congressional district.

Randy performed at the top of his class the entire time he attended this academy and he and his family did have to make many sacrifices to make this happen. Randy has proven to be one of those rare individuals with the ability to rise to the top in the face of adversity.

We are proud that he is now the fourth member of the Law Enforcement Division and look forward to each of us working alongside Randy as we continue our efforts in law enforcement with the MFC.

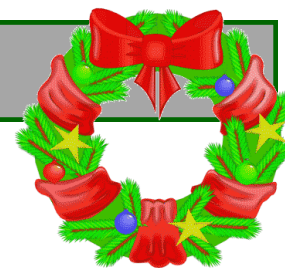


RANDY WILSON

Over the span of his 11 years with the MFC I have worked with Randy on numerous fire cases and other activities with the MFC. Randy has always shown himself to be an individual with integrity, highly motivated and also a tremendous amount of leadership qualities. These traits as well as many more Randy will bring to the Law Enforcement Division. I have seen firsthand how Randy performs during fire investigations and know that he will be an asset to us. Scott Miles



Odds and Ends



Will your family cut a tree this year?

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- ♦ Travel with a companion
- ♦ Check the weather forecast
- ♦ Select a tree with a trunk that is six inches or less in diameter, and prepare to cut the tree no more than six inches above ground level
- ♦ Wear eye protection and heavy duty work gloves
- ♦ Decide in which direction you want the tree to fall
- ♦ Make sure the direction you choose is clear of all obstacles, including power lines and vehicles
- ♦ Make the back cut by standing to the side and away from the trunk
- ♦ Step away as soon as the tree begins to fall

Tips courtesy the U.S. Forest Service

New To Facebook:

- Longleaf Implementation Team... Please visit and "Like" to stay informed about LLP activities and events. (<https://www.facebook.com/>)



The Tax Tips for Forest Landowners for the 2013 Tax Year is now available online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/tax.shtml>.

PREVENTING THE FLU

Flu incidence is rising steadily in Mississippi, but you can take steps to protect yourself. Start by washing your hands thoroughly and frequently, since the influenza virus can be easily spread by contact. To protect others, stay home if you're sick, and remember to cover your coughs and sneezes. For the best protection, get a flu shot, or ask your doctor about flu nasal spray. You get your flu shot at any county health department, or locate a flu shot provider near you by visiting this [web site](#).



DID YOU KNOW?

- ? Homes with "street trees," those planted between the sidewalk and street, sell for \$7,130 more on average than homes without street trees. Source: The Wall Street Journal
- ? California's Rim Fire was ignited by an illegal campfire.
- ? Bug-eating birds species including yellow warblers have cut Costa Rica's borer-beetle infestations by half.
- ? The average single-family home (2,000 sq.ft.) can contain 16,900 board feet of lumber and up to 10,000 square feet of panel products. In Michigan, that much wood might be equivalent of 3-7 acres of forest.
- ? Inch to inch, wood is 16 times more efficient as an insulator than concrete, 415 times as efficient as steel, and 2,000 times as efficient as aluminum. It's also cheaper to produce, has much less negative environmental impact, and is renewable.
- ? Wood is the third largest globally traded primary commodity (by monetary value), behind petroleum and natural gas.



Mississippi Firewise



Firewise Workshops

Firewise workshops are **FREE** events, however, **pre-registration is required**. Meals, refreshments and workshop materials will be provided. Firewise workshop and/or field days are a one-day event, bringing together citizens, business, and community leaders involved in planning, financing, building, sustaining, and protecting communities in the wildland/urban interface. This will be a learning experience and participants will learn about why homes burn, various wildland fuel reduction techniques, and how to assess the fire danger of their own home.

- **Jefferson Davis County** - The Mississippi Forestry Commission and Jefferson Davis County SWCD are sponsoring a How To Have A Firewise Home event on **December 10, 2013** at the Ezra Garner Memorial Building, Prentiss, MS. Please contact Holly Daley, Jefferson Davis County SWCD Office at (601) 792-8601 Ext. 3 or stop by at 714 Columbia Ave-

nue, Suite B, Prentiss, MS. [Click here](#) for a introduction letter, program agenda and pre-reregistration letter.

- **Wayne County** - The Mississippi Forestry Commission and Southeast RC&D are sponsoring a How To Have A Firewise Home event on **March 13, 2014** at the Maynor Creek Lodge, Maynor Creek Water Park, Waynesboro, MS. Please contact Lenora Haynes at (601) 307-6728. [Click here](#) for a introduction letter, program agenda and pre-reregistration letter.

Firewise is an educational program for homeowners and community leaders. This program is for anyone living in, or connected to, the Wildland Urban Interface. Information is available on how to design, construct, landscape, and maintain home or community so as to withstand a wildfire without the aid of firefighting resources on scene.



Facts About Home Holiday Fires

- One of every three home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious. On average, one of every 40 reported home structure Christmas tree fires results in a death compared to an average of one death per 142 total reported home structure fires.
- A heat source too close to the tree causes roughly one in every six of Christmas tree fires.
- More than half (56%) of home candle fires occur when something that can catch on fire is too close to the candle.
- December is the peak time of year for home candle fires. In December, 11% of home candle fires began with decorations compared to 4% the rest of the year.
- 905 people die in winter home fires each year.
- \$2,091,000,000 in property loss occurs from winter home fires.
- 67 percent of winter fires occur in one- and two-family homes.
- Cooking is the leading cause of all winter home fires.
- 5 to 8 p.m. is the most common time for winter home fires.

The Joy
of CHRISTMAS
CELEBRATE THE SEASON

Source: National Fire Protection Association and National Fire Incident Reporting System 2009-2011

(Continued from page 5, The National Christmas Tree)

Square with the intent of using alternating between trees each year. But when it became clear later that year that the National Christmas Tree would have to be moved from Sherman Square, the agency asked the Commission of Fine Arts (which had partial jurisdiction over planting decisions around the White House) for permission to the plant the two trees to the southeast and southwest of the statue of Andrew Jackson in Lafayette Square. The Commission of Fine Arts opposed the plan, and suggested that two fir trees be planted east and west of the statue instead.

In 1939, the National Community Christmas Tree was moved back to the Ellipse. Reasons for moving the event varied. A 36-foot (11 m) high red cedar was dug up from along the Mount Vernon Memorial Parkway in Virginia, and planted just a few days before Christmas at a site just south of the center of the Ellipse. (The tree was replanted back at its old site after January 1, 1940.) The tradition of using a briefly-transplanted tree occurred again in 1940. The 1940 tree was a 34-foot (10 m) high red cedar. Once more, the tree was taken from along the Mount Vernon Memorial Parkway and replanted after January 1.

In 1941, the National Christmas Tree was relocated to just inside the south fence on the South Lawn of the White House. President Roosevelt personally made the request (after having discussed the issue with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt on December 24, 1940) so that the ceremony could be a more "homey"

experience. Two live, 35-foot (11 m) high Oriental spruce trees were taken from the White House grounds itself and planted 100 feet (30 m) north of the south fence of the White House (each about 25 feet (7.6 m) off the north-south axis with the Jefferson Memorial). As with the trees in Lafayette Park, they were to be used in alternate years. After the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, there was concern that the tree would not be lit due to security concerns. But the ceremony and musical program went ahead as planned, with the east tree serving as the year's National Community Christmas Tree.

For the first time in its history, the National Community Christmas Tree was not lit in 1942 due to the need to conserve power and observe security restrictions on outdoor lighting. For security reasons, it was not lit again until after the war concluded in 1945.

The lighting ceremony was first televised in 1946, although the broadcast was limited and reached few homes. The two Oriental spruce trees were again found to be damaged by the decorations. Federal officials raised the suggestion that the trees be replaced with artificial trees, but this was actively opposed by the live Christmas tree industry and the idea was dropped. Television coverage expanded for the 1947 ceremony, with both NBC and the DuMont Television Network televising the event. Television coverage continued to expand in the following years. In 1948, the tree included many more white bulbs in addition to the traditional red and green ones, so that the tree would

look better on TV. It was also topped by a star-shaped tree topper consisting of eight flashing bulbs.

The first living trees: 1973 to 1977 Having used cut trees from around the country since 1954, the Christmas Pageant of Peace reintroduced a living tree in 1973. A 42-foot Colorado blue spruce from the Sunset Lake Nursery near Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, was donated by the National Arborist Association and planted in the Ellipse close to the Zero. The tree arrived in the city via flatbed truck and was planted on October 11, 1973. By December 1976, it was clear that the National Christmas Tree planted just three years earlier was dying. The appearance of the tree had deteriorated significantly, with many of the lower branches dead or damaged and many parts of the tree showing large areas of dead needles.

An anonymous resident of Potomac, Maryland donated a 34-foot (10 m) tall blue spruce as the new National Christmas tree. The new tree was planted on the Ellipse on November 3, 1977. President Jimmy Carter, assisted by his daughter, Amy, lit the tree during a ceremony on December 15, 1977.

The 1977 living tree did not last, however. January 1978 brought several severe rain and snow storms to the Washington, D.C., region, along with heavy winds, heavy precipitation, and extremes in temperatures. On January 26, 62 mph (100 km/h; 54 kn) winds whipped through the nation's capitol (and a tornado damaged homes in nearby Quantico, Virginia). Park

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11, The National Christmas Tree)

Service officials feared the National Christmas Tree would be toppled, and attached guy-wires to the tree to keep it upright. But despite the additional bracing, the tree was nearly uprooted in mid-afternoon and leaned at a 45 degree angle for several hours until workers were able to get it upright again.

The National Park Service undertook a lengthy study to find a species of tree that could thrive in the climate and soil conditions of the capital and better withstand the annual decoration process. Agency officials traveled more than 2,000 miles (3,200 km) to find a tree that met their specifications. A 30-foot (9.1 m) tall blue spruce, located at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Myers of York, Pennsylvania, was chosen as the new National Christmas Tree planted in the Ellipse in 1978. A second tree, an 18-foot (5.5 m) tall blue spruce purchased from a nursery in New Jersey, was planted in a corner of the Ellipse in early summer 1978 for use as a spare in case the new transplanted tree did not survive. New, stronger cables were used to help brace the tree against high winds. The bronze plaque at the base of the tree was altered slightly to reflect the new date of the tree's transplanting (October 11, 1978).

The tree was topped off by First Daughter Amy Carter on December 5, 1978, a ceremony which began a new tradition of having a member of the President or Vice President's family top off the tree (a tradition observed every year since except in 1980).

In 1979, the National Christmas Tree was only partially lit. When President Jimmy Carter sent his daughter Amy to light the tree on December 13, the switch lit only the star atop the National Christmas Tree, while the state trees on the Pathway of Peace were illuminated only by tiny blue lights. Carter told the surprised crowd that the National Christmas Tree would remain dark until the American hostages in Iran were set free. The National Christmas Tree again remained largely unlit in 1980. President Carter's five-year-old grandson, Jason, switched on the tree. The tree had been completely decorated with large balls and lights, but at a meeting in early December 1980 the families of the American hostages asked that the tree remain unlit. The lights on the tree shone for 417 seconds, one second for every day that the hostages had been captive. The lights were then turned off, leaving only the star atop the tree shining. Following the release of the American hostages, the tree was lit once again.

In 1992, the National Park Service permitted the first National Christmas Tree ornament to be produced. The designer was Peggy Henkel, president of Georgetown Marketing Company (formerly American Marketing), and to avoid rules against commercialization the ornament was distributed without charge. 1992 was also the year that the National Christmas Tree and Pageant of Peace was featured on the official White House Christmas card. The card was created by artist Kamil Kubik and printed by Hallmark Cards.

To celebrate the millennium on December 31, 1999, the National Christmas Tree's lights turned white at midnight.

On Saturday, February 19, 2011, the National Christmas tree was felled after its trunk snapped in a wind-storm which contained gusts of up to 50 mph (80 km/h; 43 kn). The new tree was planted on March 19, 2011. The new tree was a 26.5-foot (8.1 m) tall Colorado blue spruce which was obtained from an unnamed tree nursery in New Jersey.

On May 5, 2012, the blue spruce was declared dead by the National Park Service due to "transplant shock". On Saturday, October 27, 2012, a 28-foot (8.5 m) Colorado blue spruce from Virginia was planted as the new National Christmas Tree. The Park Service decided to plant the tree even though Hurricane Sandy would pass near the D.C. area in less than 48 hours. Park Service horticulturists felt the tree was safer in the ground than in the container in which it was shipped. Wires were attached to the tree to help stabilize it, and a special base (hidden by mulch and soil) surrounded the roots to help prevent flooding.

Sources of National Christmas Trees

Cut evergreen trees were used in 1923, and from 1954 to 1972. Living trees were used from 1924 to 1953, and again from 1973 to the present (2012). The species, height, and sources of these trees has varied widely over time.

MFC Training Schedule (January - May 2014)



Title	Dates	Location	Contact Person
L-280 Followship To Leadership	February 4 - 6, 2014	Wiggins, MS	Ed Brown
	February 11 - 13, 2014	Forest, MS; Bienville NF Work Center	Ed Brown
	March 4 -6, 2014	Pearl, MS; SRFTC	Ed Brown
Fire Refresher & PPE Inspection	January 8 - 9, 2014	Capital District	Ed Brown
	January 8 - 9, 2014	East Central District	Jeff Ware
	January 15 - 16, 2014	South Central District	Ed Brown
	January 15 - 16, 2014	Northwest District	Jeff Ware
	January 22 - 23, 2014	Southeast District	Ed Brown
	January 22 - 23, 2014	Northeast District	Jeff Ware
	January 29 - 30, 2014	Southwest District	Ed Brown
Prescribe Burning Shortcourse	April 8th – 11, 2014	Pearl, MS; Southern Regional Fire Training Center	Jeff Ware
	March 17th – 20th, 2014	SWD/Capital District	Ed Brown
S-215 Fire Operations in the Wildland Urban Interface	May, 2014	Verona, MS; MS State Extension Service	Jeff Ware
	May, 2014	Elliott, MS; Northwest District Office	Jeff Ware

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Accident Prevention Plan and Safety Manual

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Have You Received Your New Accident Prevention Plan and Safety Manual? If not, please contact Safety/Training Director Jeff Ware at jware@mfc.state.ms.us or Safety/Training Forester Ed Brown at ebrown@mfc.state.ms.us.



Having





Fun!!!



Safety First . . .

Holiday Hazard Checklist



The holidays should be a magical time for children. Yet each year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 8,700 people for injuries, such as falls, cuts and shocks, related to holiday lights, decorations and Christmas trees.

Keep the season merry with this list of safety tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Safer Trees and Decorations

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." Although this label does not mean the tree won't catch fire, it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. Because heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.
- Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard.

- Use only noncombustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by children.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use nonflammable holders and place candles out of children's reach.
- Take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid the child swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food, which may tempt a child to eat them.
- Wear gloves to avoid eye and skin irritation while decorating with spun glass "angel hair." Follow container directions carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial-snow sprays.

Bright Ideas for Lights

- Indoors or outside, always use lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory that indicates conformance with safety standards.
- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections, and throw out damaged sets.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become

charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.

- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores).
- Plug all outdoor electric decorations into circuits with ground fault circuit interrupters to avoid potential shocks.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.

Friendlier Fireplaces

- Use care with "fire salts," which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children.
- Do not burn wrapping papers in the fireplace. A flash fire may result, as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.
- Before lighting any fire, remove all greens, boughs, papers, and other decorations from fireplace area. Check to see that the flue is open.

From Reade's Digest.